

February 1, 2005

To: Federal Communications Commission
From: Raynard C. Soon
RE: Support Comments for Petition for Waiver, CC Docket No. 96-45

I am the immediate past chairman of the Hawaiian Homes Commission and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. My term ended on December 31, 2002. In my former position, I was responsible for the administration of the lands that were placed in trust for native Hawaiians by the U.S. Congress. I am writing in support of the Sandwich Isles Communications, Inc. petition for waiver, because I sincerely believe Sandwich Isles Communications is fulfilling a great need for modern and affordable telecommunications services for all of Hawaiian Home Lands.

Before the Commission extended the telecommunications license assigned to Sandwich Isles Communications, single party line service was not available to many of the Hawaiian Home Land communities and developments throughout the State of Hawaii. And, Hawaiian Home Lands or its residents were expected to pay significantly high construction costs to receive dial tone. Sandwich Isles Communications is providing high quality telecommunications services and has brought financial relief to the department and to residents.

By taking full financial responsibility for developing the telecommunications infrastructure and services for all of Hawaiian Home Lands, Sandwich Isles Communications is helping Hawaiian Home Lands stretch its financial resources and concentrate on developing other much needed and costly utilities including power, water and waste water systems to improve the homesteaders' quality of life.

As the Commission contemplated development of its lands that were unserved or inadequately served by telephone service, the Commission determined to ensure that all of Hawaiian Home Lands would receive access to modern and affordable telecommunications services. The exclusive telecommunications license was granted and assigned to Sandwich Isles Communications by the Commission who has jurisdictional authority over all Hawaiian Home Lands.

Without Sandwich Isles Communications, many of the Hawaiian Home Lands communities that exist today or will be developed in the future would go unserved or be inadequately served. More importantly, without modern telecommunications services, especially to the very rural areas of the state, residents would not have eventual access to broadband services necessary to deliver distance learning, telemedicine and e-commerce opportunities. Hawaiian Home Lands needs Sandwich Isles Communications, and I urge your support and approval to define Hawaiian Home Lands as the Sandwich Isles Communications study area as the Commission intended with the extension of the telecommunications license assigned to Sandwich Isles Communications. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.